

POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES

Benchmark Statement

To assist local law enforcement in their effort to reduce traffic related deaths and injuries, through enforcement and education.

Objectives

To provide needed equipment to local law enforcement agencies. To conduct four Operation KIDStraining workshops. To assist in selective enforcement efforts. To provide the opportunity for two law enforcement officers to attend conferences or workshops to enhance their expertise. To distribute the crash investigation program upgrade for laptop computers to all law enforcement agencies statewide.

Accomplishments

The purchase of specific traffic enforcement equipment has allowed many local law enforcement agencies to increase the enforcement of hazardous traffic behaviors within their communities. Priority was given to those agencies working closely with our Safe Community projects, though many other agencies received funding for their equipment needs. Agencies also received training opportunities and overtime shifts were provided in

many areas, with local agencies working together at administrative checkpoints and various selective traffic enforcement efforts.

The ***Buckle or Busted Campaign*** awarded 11,500 overtime hours to 81 law enforcement agencies to conduct selective seat belt enforcement shifts. During these shifts, a total of 27,770 citations and warnings were issued to drivers and passengers of motor



vehicles.

A badly needed upgrade to the ***Accidents Investigation Mapping System (AIMS)*** software was purchased. This upgrade includes a site license which allows for copies to be made and placed at various locations, making it much more accessible to those using the service.

The upgrade is also more compatible with the old and new equipment being used, making it less cumbersome to export files and download information needed to reconstruct serious crashes. Due to the preparation of the Salt Lake 2002 Olympics, this program is in somewhat of a transition period, but will be a priority after the Olympic assignment is completed.

The Utah Highway Safety Office (UHSO) hosted four ***Operation KIDS*** trainings where 52 officers were provided with the skills necessary to educate families on the proper use of their child's safety seat. Another 24 officers became nationally certified as Child Passenger Safety Technicians by attending one of the three NHTSA Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training Courses organized by the UHSO during the year.

The UHSO also assisted five local law enforcement agencies with the purchase of speed monitor trailers for use in their communities. These monitors are seen regularly throughout the State, both on rural and metropolitan roadways, and have been very popular for use in school zones and on targeted roadways to inform the motorists of their speed and encourage safe driving.

With the completion of the I-15 reconstruction, Salt Lake began experiencing increased speed limits and other hazardous driving behaviors. During September 2001, the Utah Highway Patrol conducted a special enforcement blitz in Salt Lake County focusing on **aggressive driving** violations. Troopers from outlying areas and agents from the State Bureau of Investigation were invited to help educate motorists on aggressive driving behaviors. The local media helped get the word out to the public that officers would be out in full force during that week, and were told that the objective was to reduce speed and gain compliance to traffic laws, especially on the Interstate (I-15). Additional dispatchers were needed to handle the calls. During the initial phase of the enforcement campaign, it became patently obvious that the unmarked vehicles and motorcycles were markedly more effective than traditional patrol units. These units were operated by uniformed officers and were extremely well received by both the violators and the motoring public. During the first week of the enforcement campaign, 2448 vehicle

stops were conducted and there were no complaints received by the UHP. The e-mails, letters, and phone calls were both positive and supportive.

A 53-mile stretch of highway between Spanish Fork and Price (**SR-6**) has posed traffic safety problems for years. Reader's Digest wrote an article including SR-6 as one of the top five deadliest highways in the nation calling it "The Road To Death." In the summer of 2001, the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) put together a documentary about the dangers in the canyon. The Utah Highway Patrol escorted the BBC in helicopter to get a birds-eye view of the canyon (see picture). After reviewing the crash data from SR-6, there were no specific hours of the day, days of the week or months of the year that had a higher fatality rate than another. Property damage crashes increase on the weekends and during the winter months, but in jury crashes remain about consistent from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Therefore, it was determined that the problem is not the canyon itself, but with aggressive drivers. Speeding is the number one factor along with improper passing, unsafe lane changes, following too closely, and other traffic violations. To address the problem, troopers used conventional tactics, i.e., radar and laser detection for speeding vehicles and the use of unmarked

patrol vehicles. Two or three troopers would work the canyon at one time, which got the attention of the motoring public. The Utah Department of Transportation assisted this effort by



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placing signs advising of increased traffic enforcement and upcoming passing lanes. At least 4,325 hours of enforcement were provided to the UHP. In turn, 5,691 vehicle stops were recorded, 8,342 citations were issued, along with 1331 public assists. Many motorists commented that they had never seen so many troopers working the canyon at once. Most of them agreed that having added enforcement in the canyon would slow people down.

Challenges

Even though the UHSO assists many law enforcement agencies with their requests for selective traffic enforcement activities and badly needed equipment, many go unanswered. It is difficult to see some of the smaller agencies with restricted budgets go without the tools they need to encourage and enforce safe driving habits.

Aggressive Driving Enforcement Program-Salt Lake County		
Violation	Arrest	Warrant
Following Too Close	41	5
Improper Turn	7	7
Improper Lane Travel	39	14
Speeding	658	81
Right of Way	0	1
Seat Belt	147	3
All Other Violations	554	90